

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

IO-10 SAM-01 /068 W

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R 080400Z JULY 75

FM AMCONSUL LAHORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0493

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMCONSUL KARACHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAHORE 0794

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PK

SUBJECT: GOVERNOR KHAR TO STEP DOWN

REF: LAHORE 785

1. PUNJAB GOVERNOR MUSTAFA KHAR TOLD ME JULY 7 HE WOULD BE LEAVING GOVERNOR'S HOUSE "SHORTLY" (BUT NOT THIS WEEK). HE SAID HIS "INFORMATION WAS THAT CHIEF MINISTER RAMAY WILL RESIGN IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS" AND ACCEPT SENATE SEAT AND CENTRAL MINISTERSHIP. HE EXPECTED FORMER GOVERNOR SADIQ HUSSAIN QURESHI TO BE NEW CHIEF MINISTER AND HAYAT MOHAMMAD KHAN TUMMAN TO BE NEW GOVERNOR. HE WONDERED ALOUD WHETHER NEW TEAM WOULD WORK OUT, SINCE "BOTH ARE BLAND MEN WITH NOT MUCH IMAGINATION." HE INDICATED THAT, AMONG OTHERS, HIS ENEMY, PUNJAB AGRICULTURE MINISTER KHAKWANI, WOULD PROBABLY REMAIN IN PROVINCIAL CABINET.

2. AS FOR HIS OWN FUTURE, KHAR SAID HE WANTED TO GET OUT OF LIMELIGHT TEMPORARILY, SO HE HAD NOT YET ACCEPTED ANY POSITION, THOUGH HE HAD BEEN OFFERED "ANY MINISTRY I WANTED IN ISLAMABAD" BY PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO. HE SAID HE COULD NOT REMAIN AS GOVERNOR BECAUSE IT WAS POWERLESS POSITION, AND THAT, AFTER ALL, HE HAD PROVED FOR ALL TO SEE THAT HE

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HAD MANAGED DURING PRESENT TERM TO FORCE "COMMUNISTS AND OTHER LEFTISTS" TO CONCEDE THAT THEIR POLICIES COULD NOT SUCCEED IN PAKISTAN.

3. KHAR SAID HE WANTED TO EXPLAIN THAT IN PAST HE HAD BEEN "ALMOST IRRATIONAL" IN HIS ACTIONS BECAUSE HE WAS DETERMINED TO FORCE ACCEPTANCE OF HIS VIEW THAT PAKISTAN SHOULD NOT VEER TO LEFT. HE BELIEVED THAT WAS MOST IMPORTANT FEATURE OF HIS TERM AS GOVERNOR. HE REGRETTED "SILLY" FIGHT HE AND RAMAY HAD HAD OVER PAST MONTHS, AND SAID RAMAY HAD EXPRESSED SAME FEELINGS TO HIM. BATTLE WAS NOW OVER, KHAR ASSERTED, AND AS EVIDENCE OF SUCH, TOLD ME THAT LATE JULY 4 HE HAD RECEIVED A TELEPHONE CALL FROM CHIEF MINISTER WHO HAD SAID HE WAS SORRY GOVERNOR HAD NOT ATTENDED OUR JULY FOURTH RECEPTION BECAUSE THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN "GOOD PLACE TO TALK, AND BESIDES WOULD HAVE GIVEN PEOPLE SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT." HE SAID HE AND RAMAY HAD AGREED THAT ONE FACTOR IN ENDING THEIR SQUABBLE WAS DESIRE THAT AMERICANS NOT GET IMPRESSION PAKISTAN WAS IN DANGER OF "COMING APART."

4. COMMENT: KHAR SOUNDED LIKE MAN WHO HAS BEEN TAUGHT ROUGH LESSON. IF HIS REMARKS ARE ACCURATE REFLECTION OF HIS TRUE VIEWS, HE HAS COME TO BELIEVE THAT HE CANNOT AT PRESENT TIME STAND UP TO BHUTTO. HE DID NOT MENTION ONE POSSIBLE HITCH TO HIS BECOMING FEDERAL MINISTER -- THAT HE DOES NOT HOLD NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OR SENATE SEAT. HE DID ACKNOWLEDGE THAT HE EXPECTED PUBLIC TO SPECULATE THAT HE WAS DISMISSED FROM OFFICE WITHOUT BEING OFFERED COMPENSATORY POSITION, AND THAT HE NO LONGER BELIEVED HE HAD SUFFICIENT BACKING IN PUNJAB TO FIGHT PRIME MINISTER. HOWEVER, WHILE KHAR MAY BE PLACED IN POLITICAL EXILE FOR IMMEDIATE FUTURE, WE DO NOT BELIEVE HE WILL BE FINISHED AS IMPORTANT FIGURE IN PAKISTANI POLITICS IN LONGER RUN. HE HAS INSTINCTIVE CANNINESS AND AMBITION AND IS YOUNG ENOUGH TO OUTLAST MANY COMPETITORS. HE MAY HAVE INDICATED WHAT HIS NEXT ASSIGNMENT WILL BE BY SEVERAL TIMES REFERRING TO NATIONAL ELECTIONS, WHICH HE BELIEVED WOULD TAKE PLACE WITHIN YEAR.
GRIFFIN

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